

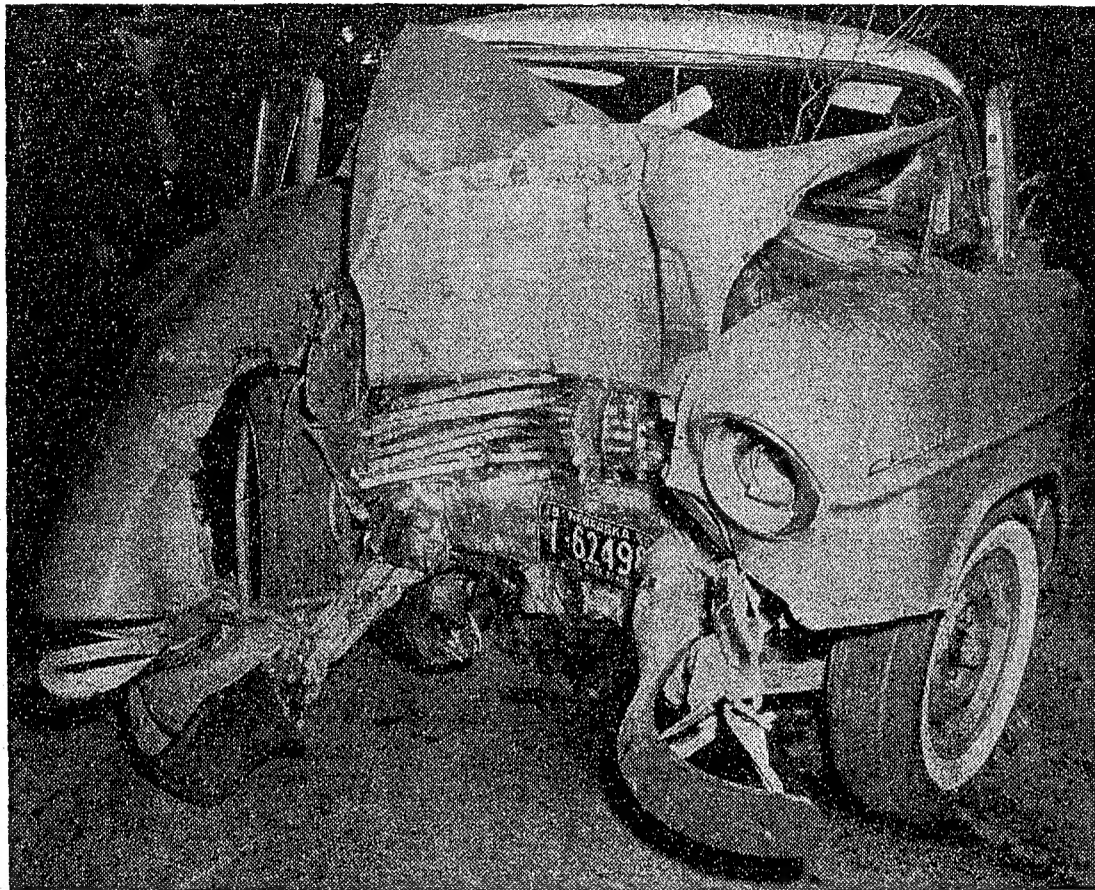
EXTRA

The Gateway

Volume XLI OMAHA UNIVERSITY
OMAHA, NEBRASKA, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1961 SPECIAL

EXTRA

“...so fast...”
“...don't go so fast!”



An evergreen tree along the Elmwood Park Road still bears the mark where this speeding car struck it at 75 miles per hour. (Photo by Russ Grove.)

By Leigh Wilson

Eleven o'clock, Friday night, Oct. 28, 1960.

A 1955 Chevrolet turned right off Dodge Street onto Elmwood Road just east of Omaha University. As the car leaned hard around the corner, the driver nudged the accelerator. The car pulled out of the turn and leaped ahead. A good feeling, power.

The young driver tensed his right leg again, and the car moved even faster, responding to the pressure.

The cool fall air whipped through the open windows as the car accelerated. Elmwood Road is a long, gentle right curve, eventually meeting four other roads in a park intersection below the University. Just before the intersection, Elmwood Road breaks the gentle curve and cuts hard right.

As the car moved faster and faster around the curve, it drifted a little to the left.

A girl in the back seat grabbed the arm rest to keep herself from sliding. All six passengers in the hurtling car leaned to their right as the driver pulled the wheel to keep the speeding car... drifting a little more now... on the road.

Just Some Week-End Fun
Faster, faster. An exhilarating feeling, this.

A few minutes earlier, at a West Omaha Drive-in, the four high school girls had, with the promise of a little week-end excitement, accepted a ride, with two boys. A third boy, alive today, decided to pass up the ride and go home. The six young people left the drive-in for their last week-end excitement.

The car, now moving 75 miles-an-hour, was drifting hard to the left. Trees white in the headlights flashed by.

One of the girls may have screamed at the driver to slow down. He didn't.

Maybe he was racing with another car. No one will probably ever know.

The driver's insides went light as he fought the wheel. Then he

met the hard right turn. He tried to break the wheel. No time at 80 miles-an-hour.

The other boy braced himself against the dashboard. The girls covered their faces with their arms. Screams.

The car could not respond to the driver's panicked fighting. The red and white Chevy bounded across the road, bounced over the curb, sideswiped a big pine on the left, hurtled 45 more feet and smashed dead-center into another solid pine. Then all was quiet.

Only 7/10 of a Second

Within seven-tenths of a second, six young persons mashed against the windshield, the dashboard, the steering wheel and each other.

In eight-tenths of a second, five of them were no longer young persons, but only bodies piled in the shuddering wreckage of a car.

The sixth passenger, a slim young girl, barely alive, lay on her back across the top cushion of the front seat, her face battered and bloodied. She cried faintly, "... so fast... don't go so fast... don't..."

A few other newsmen and I went silently about our work recording the horror of the scene. Through a motion picture camera viewfinder, the scene was faraway, unreal.

But the rescue squadmen's shocked, urgent voices, a muffled scream from the knot of wide-eyed bystanders, the howl of sirens and a dozen flashing red lights brought me back to reality.

There was too much reality. My vision blurred. I wiped my eyes dry and tried to adjust a lens. In a matter of minutes, the dead were gone, and the mothers and fathers were being notified.

"Don't Go So Fast"

"Don't go so fast," Traffic Investigator Merrill Putnam said a few hours later, his words echoing the girl's last. He called the "accident"—if you can call it an accident—the worst he'd ever seen.

"Don't go so fast," Police Chief C. Harold Ostler told Omahans in a traffic crackdown that followed the "accident"—if you can call it an accident.

"Don't go so fast," say thousands of parents every week to their youngsters as they leave for a night of excitement, "we don't want you to have an 'accident'—if you can call it an accident."

The Elmwood wreck wasn't an accident. True, the six teens—only memories now—didn't run into the tree on purpose, but an accident is something that is inevitable; can't be prevented. This should never have happened.

Recipe for Death

Youthful energy plus a desire for excitement, plus power... power enough to hurl half-a-dozen teenagers to sudden death... is a deadly recipe.

As I think back to a lot of wasted months spent playing hot-rod, I remember how I looked (Continued on Page 4.)

How Can Safety Be Sold—Through Emotion, Purse?

This special issue has only one purpose—to impress our readers with the need for safe driving. And what is the best way to impress a motorist with this need? To emphasize the rewards he can reap, or the losses he may sustain? We don't know!

Millions of words have been printed presenting both side of the story. The bulk of these words have told the story of the glaring loss of life, but few have told of those who have lost an asset nearly as precious—TIME. And probably to no one group is time more precious than to the college student. That loss of time can be felt in several ways.

Most obvious is money. First is the expense of college itself, second, the paycheck students don't receive while attending college.

Compare this with the bills that would come in because of a time-loss accident. The normal college bills would continue, in addition to hospital and possible legal bills, plus numerous minor expenses.

Few students could afford such heavy losses and still pick up their education where they left off.

And, statistically, dropping out of school for any reason is financially unwise since records show the average college graduate earns about \$100,000 more than the non-graduate over a lifetime.

There's a little bit here for everyone. We hope some portion of it may impress you with the reason.



"... AND HE USED TO BRAG ABOUT HIS 400 HORSEPOWER ENGINE."

Signs Serve As Reminder

The seventeen crosses placed on the Omaha University campus last week are to serve as a reminder to students to drive safely.

The red seven tenths may help you (the driver) to remember in that careless second—to slow down or stop in time, because the next second may hold the fatal seven-tenths.

That SAFETY is simply good business should be easily understood by everyone on a university campus—a place where good judgment, and reasoned understanding are presumed to prevail—with the result that we govern our conduct according to the rules and regulations of safety which will be the most profitable for the most people on all occasions.

President Milo Ball

An automobile speeding along at 55 miles per hour suddenly shoots off the road and smashes into a tree.

One second later, it's all over.

In the first tenth of the fatal second the front bumper and the grill collapse.

The second tenth finds the hood crumbling, rising and striking the windshield as the spinning rear wheels lift from the ground. The fenders begin wrapping themselves around the tree, and, although the car's frame has been halted, the driver's body is still going 55 miles per hour. Instinct causes him to stiffen his legs against the crash and they snap at the knee joint.

During the third tenth of a second, the driver's torso lunges from the seat and his broken knees bang into the dash board. The steering wheel starts to disintegrate and the steering column aims for the driver's chest.

The fourth tenth reveals two feet of the car's front end wrecked, while the rear end keeps moving at 35 m.p.h. and the driver's body is still traveling at 55.

In the fifth tenth of a second the driver is impaled on the steering column and blood rushes into his lung.

During the sixth tenth, the driver's feet are ripped out of his tightly-laced shoes. The brake pedal breaks off. The car frame buckles in the middle and the driver's head bangs into the windshield as the rear wheels, still spinning, fall back to earth.

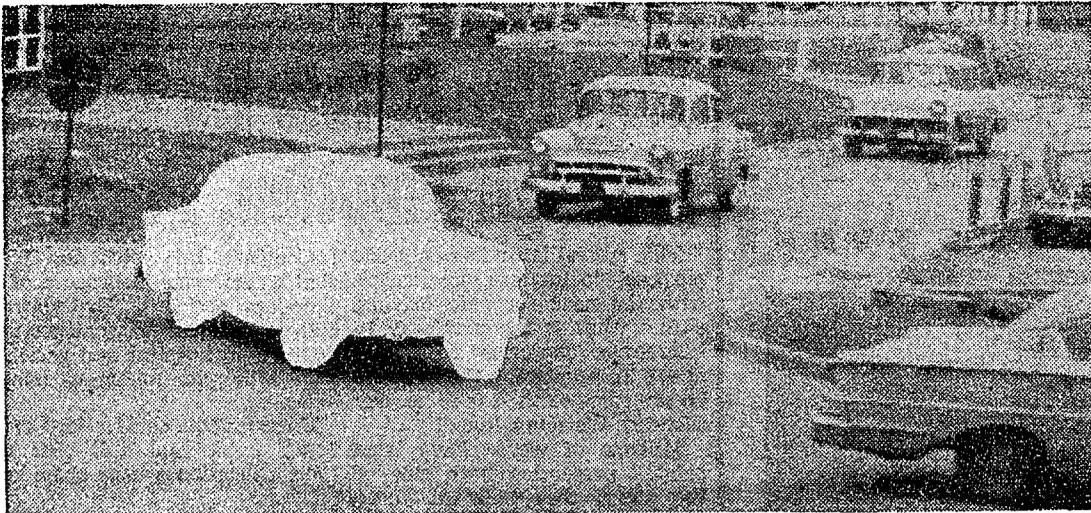
In the seventh tenth of a second, hinges rip loose, doors spring open and the seat breaks free, striking the driver from behind.

But he doesn't care, because he's already dead, and the last three tenths of a second mean nothing to him.

(Iowa Highway Patrol)

7
10

7-10 Can Take You Out of the Picture . . .



This could be the car . . .



A patch of ice . . .



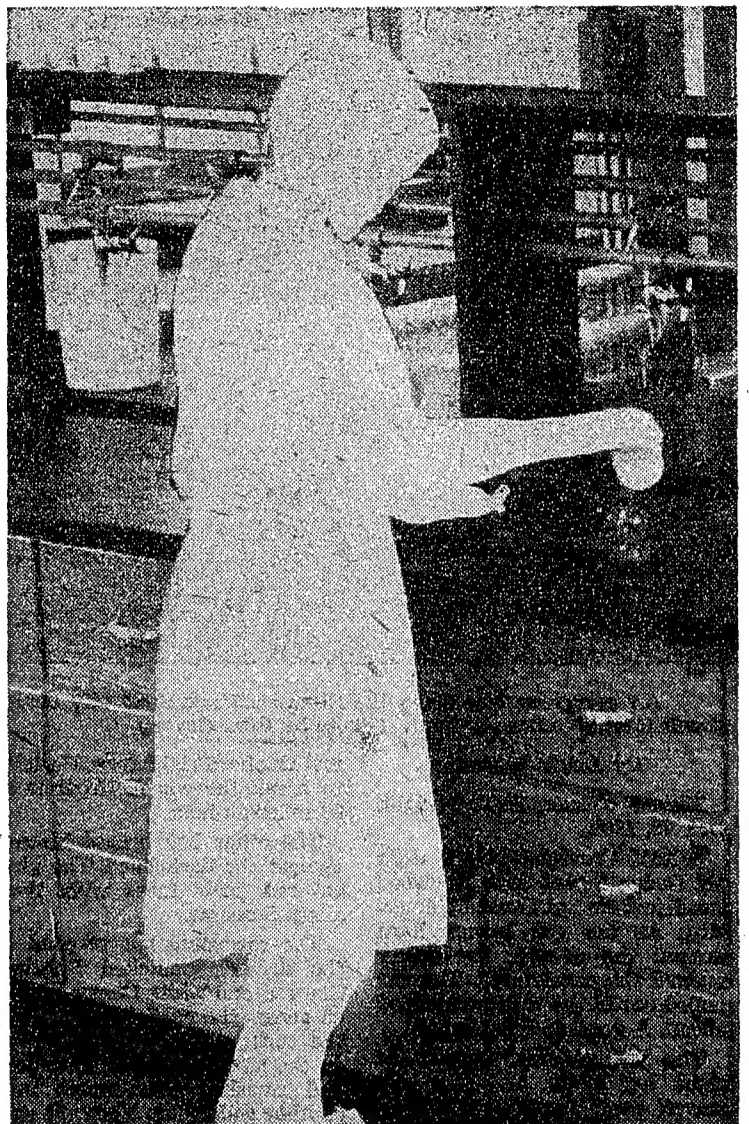
The headline across these pages could be taken two ways: can you afford the seven-tenths second, or can you afford the time "out of the picture" because of an accident?

Nothing was wrong with the camera used to take these pictures. The figures were left out to show the void left by a student taken away from campus activities by an accident.

Perhaps pictures from the home should have been included, also, to emphasize the loss the family suffers when one of its members is away.

According to the records of the Omaha Police Department and the Omaha and National Safety Council, 779,538 people have been injured so far this year. A total of 17,883 have been killed. This gives a national average of 45 injured to every one killed. In Omaha there were 29 fatalities and 2,345 injuries as of November 1.

More than one million injuries will be sustained by the year's end. How many readers of this issue will be "out of the picture?"



. . . A little speed

'I Didn't See'

"I DIDN'T SEE the child crossing the street."

"I DIDN'T SEE the other car."

"I DIDN'T SEE the stop sign."

These are common tragic explanations of automobile accidents.

There are a vast number of reasons why you fail to see:

You may be driving too fast.

There may be an obstruction.

Lights of an approaching car may blind you.

Worst of all, your own vision may be inadequate.

None of these is a valid excuse. When you are driving it is your business to see—to see everything necessary—to drive without injury to yourself or to anyone.

(The Nebraska Optometric Association)



. . . And YOU could be taken out of the picture

... Can You Afford the Time?

A car is a machine ...



It has no mind of its own ...



... Do You?

Driver's Test

Can You Read These?

Stop
Slow
R.R.

School
Children
Crossing

Do You Know What They Mean?

YOU'D BETTER

The Gateway Reminds You ...

Only 12 More Shopping Days to Go

Don't Get

Hit

by the

Christmas Rush!

**DON'T
BECOME
a Statistic
Drive
Safely**



Then use it ...



And STAY in the picture

Phantom Off; Reporters Ob Scene?



Waldeux takes notes as Rustee points at shoestrappor searching for briefcase in wreckage. Note absence of Miss December who got mad, turned in her polishing cloth, and went home.

As told by Rustee to Waldeux

We had just lit up our morning cigarette when the light on our Gateway phone flashed. I took it. I listened for a minute and frowned, then wrote down a few words on a pad.

"Accident . . . entrance . . ."

I clicked the phone, "Hello, hello," I demanded, but the phone had gone dead.

As I ran out the door carrying pencil, camera, pad, steering wheel and cigarettes, Waldo was cranking up the Gateway Stutz Phantom Four.

I heighdy ho-ed over the door



View of wreck from tree-top perch. Note stolen engine in car in foreground. Probably the work of the OU typewriter-swiping ring.

of the big black 14-seater convertible and bolted the steering wheel into place.

Waldo cranked. "Fudge," he muttered.

"Hey, you're cranking the wrong way," I yelled. "We're sucking in exhaust and pumping out gas!"

With this corrected, he climbed out on the hood and polished the hood ornament, a life-sized replica of the current Playboy playmate (we switch ornaments every month).

The cylinder fired, Waldo pulled in the concrete block, and we were off.

"Where to?" asked Waldo, loading the electric typewriter and reeling out the extension cord as we wheeled across the Student Center lawn. (We had to use the lawns because we're not allowed to use the streets. Besides, the one-way streets are confusing).

"Entrance . . ." I said.

"Which one?" he asked, plugging the coffee maker in and reeling out another extension cord.

"Don't know."

"Oh well, hurry."

I cranked a sharp right and then a left and shifting into sixth gear, roared down the steps to the library parking lot. "Where's the accident?" Waldo yelled at a school cop.

"Where's your windshield sticker?" he asked back.

"No windshield," Waldo cleverly fired back. "Had so many parking permits we couldn't see."

"Bang!" the cop cleverly fired back, puncturing our coffee pot.

"Let's try the Elmwood intersection," Waldo yelled, sticking his finger in the leaking coffee pot.

I let up on the gas pedal and we roared forward. (The pedal was hooked up backwards for better handling in traffic.) I cut across the pep bowl and up the Administration Building steps.

I sideswiped a waving man as we raced down the wrong way on 62nd St. It was Dr. Bail. (The next day, incidentally, Dr. Bail called to give us a story about the expulsion of two students who were driving down 62nd St. in a black bus.

Then we saw it. One of the best accidents in OU history. The building and grounds maintenance truck had rolled after hitting a tree, after sideswiping a carload of frat rats who plowed into the Dean's motorcycle which flipped and was lost in the creek along with a BMOC's sports car, which zoomed under a carload of Greek sweeties that went out of control and careened across the park, smashing into a cop car which had been summoned to investigate the first part of the accident.

Cars were still piling up when we arrived, and we were no exception.

As we hurtled into the midst of the turmoil, I tossed out the concrete anchor and the rope broke. The rope wrapped around an elderly shoestrappor's neck who had lost his briefcase in the wreckage.

Long after sunset we were still perched in a tree typing the story . . . and polishing Miss December. We'd seen a goody of a wreck like this coming for a long time, what with one-way streets, lack of parking, Indians practicing outside, etc., etc.

Remember, kids, Uncle Waldeux and Rustee say, "Drive carefully, because the ornament you save may be your own."

Police Emphasize Campus Hazards

By Tom Utts

It is fairly understandable that with a possible six thousand cars on campus, there have been 6,089 student stickers issued at the student personnel office, and with the university's narrow twisting, turning streets that there might be a few hazardous traffic spots on campus.

A talk with the campus police reveals that there are several spots on campus that have been continuing hosts to car collisions.

West Lot is Worst Hazard

The free west parking lot is the worst. At both corners on the west side of the lot accidents have happened.

Officers say that this is because drivers do not stay on the right hand side of the streets when they round the corners. They just come barreling down the middle and with tires tossing gravel and swing wildly around corners.

Another extremely dangerous spot for this same reason is the exit of the metered east lot behind the administration building. Cars going west out of the lot will swing to wide and if there is another car coming it causes shattered nerves for the officers directing traffic.

Turn Signals Reduce Hazards

The officers have suggested that if students will indicate which way they wish to go by the use of their turn signal, it would reduce the hazard considerably.

A spot that causes traffic officers to almost brake into tears is the one-way street between the library and the student center. As this street is continually filled with students rushing for a cup of coffee, drivers should go slowly and stop when there is a person walking in front of them. They don't.

It can be summed up that the problem on all campus streets is that drivers do not apply the same rules that are applied on city streets where you can lose your driver's licenses for careless driving.

Beyond—30—

By Ken Zimmerman

Have you ever watched a young man die?

Have you ever seen a human being lose the existence he was created to magnify?

If you had stood across Dodge Street from this campus at 1:45 a.m. Tuesday you would have seen the horrible merge of flesh, metal and speed mangled together in death.

You would have seen an automobile transmission pressed against a front seat by the violent impact of car against tree; a steering wheel driven to the ceiling by terrible concussion.

You would have seen an engine block crashing through a radio that had just reported a death-free day on Nebraska highways.

You would have seen heavy steel bolts stripped of their threads as tremendous forces ripped them from their emplacements.

You would have seen a man whose very purpose lay ahead of him hurled through a shattered windshield.

You would have seen life-blood splashed over a steering wheel, across a dashboard, drop to the cold pavement then trickle to the curb.

You would have seen an arm go limp as life departed.

You would have seen a twisted body lifted from silent, unbelievable wreckage.

You would have shuddered, sighed, murmured a comment, then gone on your way.

You would have seen a young man die.

(Reprinted from Omaha University Gateway, April 21, 1961)

'61 Grad Knows—"Impatience Doesn't Pay"

By Carole Seibert

Impatience on the highway doesn't pay.

That was the conclusion of Carolyn Richmond, a 1961 Omaha University graduate, after lying in a hospital for six weeks.

In 1957 Carolyn was returning from Glenwood State School and a psychology field trip. The driver became impatient with the slow-moving car in front of him and tried to pass. What difference did a curve and a hill

ahead make?

To four persons it was quite a difference, especially to the two who spent six weeks in the hospital recovering from the accident which resulted.

Carolyn only remembered being seared and screaming. During the first week in the hospital, she hardly knew what had happened or what was going on around her. Her injuries included a broken pelvis, broken jaw, concussion and a punctured bladder.

Hospital life was very dull and painful. Carolyn spent part of the time studying, but most of it was spent "just lying there." "The worst part of the 'ordeal' was receiving the thousands of shots. I never want to go through that again," she added.

Another girl who was injured in the same accident was in the hospital room with Carolyn. Her injuries were about the same. A boy was hospitalized but released the next day.

What happened to the driver? He escaped without injuries.

But how do you make up the time? How do you forget the suffering? How do you make up the assignments?

Carolyn couldn't make up the time nor forget the suffering, but she eventually made up her assignments.

She received all incompletes in her grades. Making up assignments took her all of the following summer and fall. She had time after work.

As a result of this accident the University of Omaha administration realized its moral responsibility to the students. The fact that "these things do happen" was brought before the University's eyes.

Consequently, the Student Travel Insurance Program was started in 1957-58. The program is written through the Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company. Today every field trip has to be chaperoned and registered. A student has to pay thirty cents per day for school travel insurance. This has to be paid five days in advance.

OU purchasing agent, James Ochsner said that the University is not legally liable but has certain moral obligations to any accident that may happen on a school sponsored activity.

Two kinds of insurance programs are set up. The local program is for student groups and sponsors meeting on campus and traveling within the city limits of Omaha. This is an optional insurance program left up to the instructor and the purchasing agent. Normally these groups are not insured.

When a group ventures out-of-town, insurance must be issued, with one exception if the group returns to a formal class period. This is the second insurance coverage program.

A person who dies or receives permanent dismemberment is awarded \$5,000 from the program. The program assures \$1,000 as a blanket coverage on hospitalization.

Claims have been held at a minimum for only two claims have been made in the past two years.

The student is the one who pays for insurance—and for impatience.

Police Echo Last Plea—"Don't Go So Fast—"

(Continued from Page 1.)

with pride on my three chrome carburetors and other speed equipment and how I eagerly exchanged information and experiences with my young, lead-footed peers.

My poor girl friend must have been a nervous wreck after a ride with me. Somebody should have taken the four-wheeled weapon away from me. I was lucky. I never hurt or killed anyone or smashed into a tree. All it cost me was money.

But I could have been in the death car. Any one could have been. You could have been.

Young people do not basically think rationally . . . their actions are spontaneous and affected by emotions, and with a 200-horsepower, 3,500-pound projectile in their hands, impulsive young people must be made to think.

College students—young adults, they're called—are generally considered to be rational, reasoning, thinking animals. In class, most of them are. Under most ordinary circumstances, the majority are. But replace that desk with a car seat, and that book with a steering wheel, and in many, a new personality emerges.

Power. A channel through which to express a feeling of youthful exuberance. A car makes a little college student feel big. Power and speed: a good feeling. But good for what? Danger, damage, death and despair?

Power and Speed Abused

In themselves, nothing is wrong with power and speed, but they are abused, thoughtlessly and pointlessly.

What's the solution? You can't

take away that desire for excitement. That's innate—a part of being human. You can't take away the power—our society is too mobile for that. Cars have become too much a part of our life.

And it's for certain that you can't suppress the youthful energy . . . but herein may lie an answer: it can—it must—be channeled.

Police try to check it on the streets, but they're criticized as being "troublemakers." Everybody hates a radar trap. Adults curse them, so young people curse them. Adults preach safety, but drive themselves to death on the highways; so young people do likewise.

Adults Set Examples

Adults have one for the road; so young drivers follow the example and have one. Or four or six.

As young people, we've got to learn to use our heads when we use our hands and feet to operate these machines.

We're burdened with a mighty heavy responsibility from the minute we turn that ignition key.

We're the ones that the adults watch and point the finger at. Let's give them reason to feel what it's like to be on the other end of that pointing finger.

Whether we're driving down an 80-mile-an-hour highway or up the 15-mile-an-hour approach to an OU parking lot, we've got to respect, not abuse, the power we command.

A car isn't a play thing. There was once an innocent young girl who found out violently. Before she died, she moaned, " . . . so fast . . . don't go so fast . . . don't . . ."

The Gateway

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